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Message Text

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INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 OMB-01 AID-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04

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R 021515Z NOV 76
FM AMEMBASSY LA PAZ
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2946
INFO AMEMBASSY ASUNCION
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AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PFOR, EGEN, ETRD, EAID, BL, AR
SUBJ: BOLIVIAN VISIT OF ARGENTINE PRESIDENT VIDELA

1. SUMMARY: ARGENTINE PRESIDENT VIDELA'S THREE DAY VISIT WITH BOLIVIA'S PRESIDENT BANZER OCTOBER 28-30 WAS HERALDED BY THE TWO LEADERS, AND THE PRESS, AS THE BEGINNING OF A NEW ERA IN CORDIAL AND MUTUALLY BENEFICIAL RELATIONS BETWEEN BOLIVIA AND ARGENTINA. AFTER FIVE YEARS OF GENERALLY COOL -- AND DURING THE PERONIST YEARS, SOMETIMES COLD RELATIONS, VIDELA'S VISIT PUT THE STAMP OF APPROVAL ON THE NEW POLICY OF BILATERAL SOLIDARITY AND ECONOMIC COMPLEMENTATION BEGUN EARLIER THIS YEAR WITH MEETINGS AND AGREE-MENTS SUBSCRIBED TO BY BOLIVIAN AND ARGENTINE FOREIGN RELATIONS AND FINANCE MINISTERS. DURING A WHIRLWIND TOUR OF LA PAZ (OCTOBER 28), COCHABAMBA (OCTOBER 29) AND SANTA CRUZ (OCTOBER 30), THE TWO PRESIDENTS CONDEMNED INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM, PLEDGED MUTUAL SUPPORT FOR A BOLIVIAN SEA OUTLET TO THE PACIFIC AND ARGENTINE
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SOVEREIGNTY OVER THE FALKLAND ISLANDS, CALLED FOR ECONOMIC IND-

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EPENDENCE FOR DEVELOPING NATIONS AND GREATER LATIN AMERICAN INTE-
GRATION AND RATIFIED EIGHT AGREEMENTS CONCERNING COOPERATION IN
THE FIELDS OF ECONOMICS, COMMUNICATIONS AND HEALTH. PRESIDENT
BANZER IN HIS REMARKS FOLLOWING THE SIGNING OF THE JOINT COMMUN-
IQUE, CHARACTERIZED LATIN AMERICA AS HAVING ONE DESTINY AND CALLED
RHETORICALLY FOR "THE FOUNDING OF A LATIN AMERICAN REPUBLIC"
WHICH COULD UTILIZE SUCH THINGS AS ECONOMY OF SCALE AND ERASE THE
ARTIFICAL BORDERS OF SMALL REPUBLICS. BANZER CALLED UPON THE
COUNTRIES OF "THIS PART OF THE CONTINENT" TO TRANSFORM OR DO AWAY
WITH ALL THAT DIVIDES THEM AND TO CREATE AN ORGANIZED AND COHESIVE
PLURALIST UNITY. PRESS COMMENTATORS' TOUTED THE NEW STATE OF
BOLIVIAN-ARGENTINE RELATIONS AS A WELCOME BALANCE TO BRAZIL'S
STRONG INFLUENCE OVER BOLIVIA. END SUMMARY.

2. ARGENTINE PRESIDENT JORGE VIDELA'S OCTOBER 28-30 VISIT TO
BOLIVIA PROVIDED A MARKED CONTRAST TO THE THREE UNPRODUCTIVE
BANZER VISITS TO ARGENTINA DURING THE PAST FIVE YEARS WHICH LEFT
RELATIONS BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES AT A LOW EBB PRIOR TO VIDELA'S
TAKEOVER. SINCE THE FALL OF THE MARIA ESTELLA PERON GOVERNMENT
BILATERAL DEALINGS HAVE WARMED CONSIDERABLY, CULMUNATING IN THE
PRESENT CHIEFS OF STATE MEETING. AGREEMENTS CONCERNED WITH IND-
USTRIAL COMPLEMENTATION, DOUBLE TAXATION, CONSOLIDATION OF THE
BOLIVIAN DEBT OWED TO ARGENTINA, ANIMAL HEALTH, ESTABLISHMENT OF A
MICROWAVE COMMUNICATIONS NETWORK BETWEEN NORTHERN ARGENTINA AND
SOUTHERN BOLIVIA, "HAM RADIO" OPERATIONS AND SKIN DISEASE CONTROL
IN FRONTIER ZONES WERE SIGNED DURING THE VISIT, NEGOTIATIONS
HAVING BEEN CONCLUDED PREVIOUSLY. THE MAJOR FINANCIAL, COMMERCIAL,
TECHNOLOGICAL AND AGRO-INDUSTRIAL AGREEMENTS RATIFIED BY VIDELA
AND BANZER PROVIDE FOR THE OPEINING OF A $50 MILLION LINE OF
CREDIT FROM THE ARGENTINE NATIONAL BANK TO THE BOLIVIAN CENTRAL
BANK TO FOMENT BOLIVIAN IMPORTS; FOR THE IMPORTATION OF AGRI-
CULTURAL AND AGRO-INDUSTRIAL MACHINERY FROM ARGENTINA; FOR
AGRICULTURAL COOPERATION IN MILK AND MEAT PRODUCTION AND IRRI-
GATION PROGRAMS, FOR A CONSIDERABLE INCREASE IN THE SUPPLY OF
BOLIVIAN NATURAL GAS TO ARGENTINA AS OF 1979; AND FOR STUDIES
LEADING TO THE CREATION OF BINATIONAL COMPANIES AND ESPECIALLY
ONE TO PRODUCE PESTICIDES IN BOLIVIA.

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3. THE JOINT COMMUNIQUE PUBLISHED OCTOBER 30 TAKES NOTE OF POSSIBILITIES FOR JOINT DEVELOPMENT AND UTILIZATION OF HYDROELECTRIC RESOURSES OF THE GRANDE, BERMEJO AND PILCOMAYO RIVERS, POSSIBILITIES FOR SCIENTIFIC,TECHNOLOGICAL, NUCLEAR ENERGY, COMMUNICATIONS, RIVER TRANSPORT AND CULTURAL COOPERATION, AN ARGENTINE PROMISE TO CONTINUE CONSTRUCTION OF THE SANTA CRUZ-TRINIDAD RAILROAD, A BILATERAL AGREEMENT TO STUDY THE SALE OF ARGENTINE WHEAT TO BOLIVIA AND BOLIVIAN PURCHASE OF SUCH WHEAT ON ACCEPTABLE FINANCIAL TERMS, AND AN ARGENTINE PROMISE TO BEGIN CONSTRUCTION OF THE PADCAYA, ARGENTINA - BERMEJO, BOLIVIA ROAD.

4. WITH THE INSTALLATION OF A MILITARY GOVERNMENT IN ARGENTINA, A NEW MEETING OF MINDS HAS DEVELOPED WHICH IS CLEARLY ILLUSTRATED IN THE COMMUNIQUE.
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SUCH JOINT CONCERNS INCLUDE CONTROL AND ERADICATION OF INTERNAL AND INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM, REVITALIZATION OF THE CUENCA DEL PLATA AGREEMENT (WITH LIKE MINDED MILITARY GOVERNMENTS), AS WELL AS SOUTHERN CONE INTEGRATION MEASURES WHICH CAN BE ACCELERATED BY HOMEGENOUSLY GOVERNED NEIGHBORS. BOTH LEADERS ALSO PLEDGE SUPPORT FOR PERENNIAL GOALS SUCH AS A SEA OUTLET FOR BOLIVIA AND SOVEREIGNTY OVER THE FALKLAND ISLANDS (ISLAS MALVINAS) FOR ARGENTINA, THE ESTABLISHMENT OF AN INTEGRATED PROGRAM FOR BASIC PRODUCTS AND REGIONAL

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INTEGRATION IN GENERAL.

5. PRESIDENT BANZER IN REMARKS CELEBRATING THE SIGNING OF THE COMMUNIQUE TALKED OF A PLAN FOR PEACE, INTEGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT FOR THE SOUTHERN CONE AND GOT HEADLINE COVERAGE FOR HIS CALL FOR A LATIN AMERICAN REPUBLIC. DESCRIBING AMERICA'S UNIFIED DESTINY, HE DECRIED THE EXISTENCE OF SMALL REPUBLICS AND ARTIFICIAL BORDERS AND THE INABILITY TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE BENEFITS OF LARGE SCALE ECONOMY WHICH REQUIRE EXTENSIVE HUMAN RESOURCES AS WELL AS MARKETS. THE SOUTHERN CONE, HE SAID, IS SUFFICIENTLY HOMOGENOUS TO ACT AS A BASE FOR REFORMATION.

6. COMMENT: FROM ALL APPEARANCES, THE VIDELA VISIT WAS A GREAT SUCCESS FOR ALL CONCERNED. PRESS COMMENTATORS CLAIM THAT IT HAS RESTORED EQUILIBRIUM BETWEEN BOLIVIA'S TWO GREAT NEIGHBORS, ARGENTINA AND BRAZIL, AND HAS SANCTIONED AGREEMENTS WHICH, WHEN IMPLEMENTED, WILL BENEFIT THE BOLIVIAN DEVELOPMENT PROCESS. THE ARGENTINES SEEM TO HAVE BEEN MORE ATUNED TO BOLIVIAN SENSIBILITIES AND HAVE NOT DEMANDED EXCESSIVE INFLUENCE IN THE BOLIVIAN ECONOMY AT THE EXPENSE OF BOLIVIAN ECONOMIC RELATIONS WITH BRAZIL. (THE ISSUE OF EXPLOITATION OF THE MUTUN IRON AND MANGANESE DEPOSITS WERE DISCUSSED ONLY PERIPHERALLY.) A GREAT WELL OF BILATERAL GOOD-FEELING HAS BEEN CREATED WHICH WILL BE FURTHER CEMENTED BY A
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BANZER VISIT TO BUENOS AIRES AT THE END OF NOVEMBER. THE MATERIAL RESULTS OF THE RATIFIED AGREEMENTS REMAIN TO BE SEEN, HOWEVER. DESPITE THE MOST SINCERE INTENTIONS, THE ARGENTINE ECONOMY MAY NOT BE IN SHAPE TO IMPROVE CONTRIBUTIONS TO SUCH PROJECTS AS ROAD AND RAILROAD CONSTRUCTION. BUT FOR THE MOMENT THE BOLIVIANS ARE NOT EXPRESSING THEIR USUAL SKEPTICISM ABOUT FOREIGN PROMISES. END COMMENT.
STEDMAN

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